

September 2010

**DRAFT: Bachelor of Science in Clinical Physiology
Central Washington University
Moderate Degree Change Proposal**

Introduction

Central Washington University (CWU) offers a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science with a Specialization in Clinical Physiology. CWU seeks approval of a Moderate Degree Change proposal to convert this specialization into a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Physiology degree. The proposed degree program would continue to be housed within the College of Education and Professional Studies Department of Nutrition, Exercise, and Health Sciences.

The Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science program was established over 10 years ago and currently serves 128 FTE students. The proposed degree program was established as a specialization in 2006 with 15 FTE students and currently serves 70 FTE students. The proposed degree program is expected to continue to serve about 70 FTE students.

Proposed Change Description and Rationale

The proposed program would offer students greater flexibility in their choice of electives. A total of 15 elective courses would be offered; currently, only seven elective courses are offered. Three of the new electives would consist of currently required courses, which would be converted to electives.

Students who want a more rigorous science background would be allowed to take general chemistry, rather than introductory chemistry as they are required to do now. A first aid course currently required would be eliminated as a prerequisite.

The change is being proposed, in part, because CWU's curricular policies preclude continuing the program as a specialization. Also, the new degree title would more accurately reflect the program's academic focus.

The proposed conversion would not require any new courses or resources. It has been approved by the department chair, college dean, undergraduate curriculum committee, and faculty senate.

Currently enrolled students would be allowed to complete the specialization or opt into the proposed program. The specialization would be phased out by June 2012.

Nearly all the current students surveyed (92 percent), indicated they strongly preferred the new degree to the existing specialization, emphasizing they believed it would positively affect future employment and educational opportunity.

External Review

The proposal was reviewed by Dr. Daniel McCann, Professor and Chair, Department of Human Physiology, Gonzaga University; and Dr. Peter Harmer, Professor and Chair, Department of Exercise Science, Willamette University. Both reviewers supported the proposed conversion and made positive comments about the curriculum. Both said the proposed degree title was appropriate, although Dr. McCann noted that it was “unique among the various descriptors” used by programs with similar content.

CWU staff indicated the proposed degree title was selected to differentiate it from other programs and to accurately reflect the course content. CWU will provide a full description of the program in its printed and online materials and include a statement about the type of employment graduates can expect to obtain. In addition, the program’s director will explain these facts verbally to prospective students.

HECB staff recommended CWU also include language explaining that some post-graduate certification programs require a master’s degree or graduate student status. CWU will follow up on the recommendation.

Staff Analysis

The Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science has an established track record of enrolling and graduating students. Enrollment in the Clinical Physiology specialization has grown dramatically since 2006, and current students strongly support converting the specialization into a major.

Since CWU diplomas do not acknowledge specializations, the proposed conversion would benefit both students and employers by clearly communicating the program’s academic focus. Although the proposal does not explicitly project an increase in enrollment, it is possible that clear communication of the program’s academic focus would attract more students seriously interested in Clinical Physiology.

By enabling CWU to maintain and perhaps expand educational attainment in a healthcare-related field, the conversion would support the *Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education* and also benefit the community.

Proposed curricular changes are moderate and no new courses would be needed. The conversion would not alter program faculty or mode of delivery. Start-up costs would be negligible. Thus, the proposed conversion meets the eligibility criteria for a Moderate Degree Change.

Staff Recommendation

After careful review of the proposal and supporting materials, staff recommends approval of the Bachelor of Science in Clinical Physiology at Central Washington University. The Higher Education Coordinating Board's Education Committee discussed the proposal during its August 25, 2010 meeting and recommended approval by the full Board.

RESOLUTION NO. 10-21

WHEREAS, Central Washington University proposes to offer a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Physiology; and

WHEREAS, The degree would result from the conversion of an existing Clinical Physiology specialization within the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science; and

WHEREAS, The conversion would align the program with Central Washington University's academic policies; and

WHEREAS, The conversion would benefit students and employers by clearly indicating the program's academic focus; and

WHEREAS, The conversion would support the *Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education* and also benefit the community by enabling CWU to maintain and perhaps expand educational attainment in a healthcare-related field; and

WHEREAS, The conversion is a moderate degree change;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Bachelor of Science in Clinical Physiology effective September 16, 2010.

Adopted:

September 16, 2010

Attest:

Jesús Hernandez, Chair

Roberta Greene, Secretary